

# ASTER'S PEACE



NATHAN HAWTHORNE  
ROWEL ROQUE



# ASTER'S PEACE

NATHAN HAWTHORNE  
WRITER, LETTERER,  
ADDITIONAL ARTIST

ROWEL ROQUE  
PENCILER AND INKER



HAWTHORNEARTS

[WWW.HAWTHORNEARTS.COM](http://WWW.HAWTHORNEARTS.COM)  
PUBLISHED BY HAWTHORNEARTS, LONDON, UK.  
© 2019 NATHAN HAWTHORNE

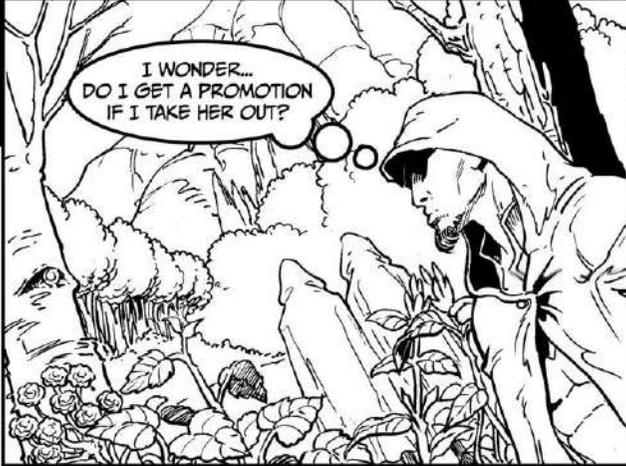


A GOOD STORY NEVER STARTS AT THE BEGINNING,  
EVERYBODY KNOWS THAT...  
THERE IS ALWAYS TOO MUCH BEHIND IT ALL, TOO MUCH COM-  
PLEXITY, TOO MANY SECRETS.  
AND SO IT IS WITH THIS ONE...  
AEONS OF HISTORY AND MILLIONS OF STORIES, ALL LEADING TO  
ONE POINT.  
AN EVENT THAT WOULD SHAKE ALL CREATION.  
NOT EVEN WE COULD HAVE BEEN PREPARED FOR THE SCALE OF  
OUR BATTLE.  
NOR COULD WE HAVE COMPREHENDED THE MAGNITUDE OF OUR  
POWER.  
WE GAINED SO MUCH...  
YET LOST IN EQUAL MEASURE.

THESE ARE THE STORIES OF THE ARK REGENESIS.

BOOK 4:

# ASTER'S PEACE







YOU DON'T  
LOOK LIKE MUCH!



WAIT A  
MINUTE!

I KNOW  
THAT VOICE!



EFRIR?!  
WHAT ARE YOU  
DOING HERE?!

I'M ON A  
MISSION,  
AVERNA.

TO KILL  
ASTER?



SOMETHING  
LIKE THAT.

SO, SHALL  
WE BEGIN?





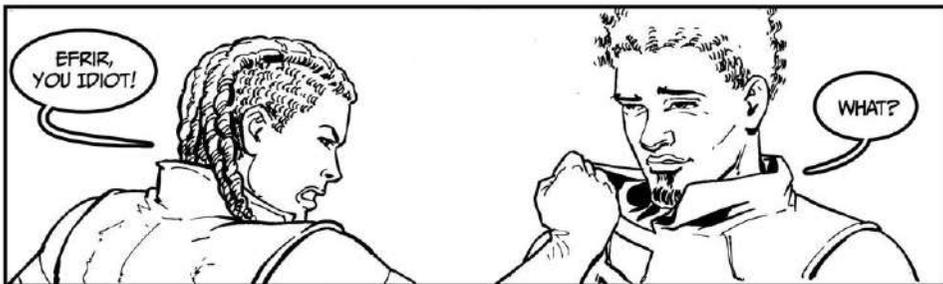
OR MAYBE YOU JUST BIT OF MORE THAN YOU CAN CHEW?

WELL YOU'VE ALWAYS KNOWN ME TO BE INSATIABLE.

I DON'T THINK I CAN DODGE THIS ONE!

THEN DO WHAT YOU MUST!





CAN'T YOU TELL?  
I'M AVERNA'S POOR, ABANDONED  
HUSBAND.



# ASTER

ASTER IS A 17-YEAR-OLD TRAINEE FROM THE SMALL AYEN VILLAGE OF ORIUS. SHE LIVED IN RELATIVE PEACE FAR FROM THE BATTLEFRONT AND APPLIED TO BEGIN TRAINING AS A TEMPLE GUARD AT THE AGE OF 15. DUTIFUL, RESPONSIBLE, AND INTELLIGENT, SHE WAS CONSIDERED A PERFECT FIT FOR THE JOB.

LIKE MANY ARKKNIGHTS, ASTER'S PASSIVE POWERS (SUPERIOR STRENGTH AND ENDURANCE) BECAME EVIDENT WHILE SHE WAS AN INFANT, BUT IT WAS ONLY IN HER MID-TEENS THAT HER POWER TO NULLIFY THE ENERGY OF ORGANIC AND INORGANIC MATTER BECAME APPARENT.

A BUDDING STRATEGIST, ASTER BEGAN HER JOURNEY MONTHS AGO, CAREFULLY MAKING HER WAY ACROSS AYE AND ONTO THE FOREIGN WORLD OF GAIA, AVOIDING CAPTURE DESPITE CLASHING WITH A NUMBER OF ARKKNIGHT SQUADRONS.



LATER.

I DON'T KNOW  
IF I SHOULD TRUST  
THEM.

AVERNA'S BEEN  
NICE TO ME EVER SINCE  
WE MET LAST MONTH. I PROBABLY  
WOULDN'T HAVE GOT THIS FAR  
WITHOUT HER.

BUT NOW THAT  
HE'S HERE...

I DON'T  
KNOW.



THE NEXT DAY.



HUH?  
ENTABENI HAMLETS?  
ASTER, WHY ARE YOU  
GOING NORTH?

MOST OF  
THE HOLY GAIAN ARMY IS  
STATIONED IN THE NORTHERN  
HEMISPHERE.



YOU'RE  
LITERALLY RUNNING  
TOWARDS DANGER.

AVERNA  
HASN'T TOLD YOU  
OUR PLAN?

...NO...



THEN WHY  
SHOULD I?

SHE'S  
GOOD.

# AVERNA

AVERNA WAS CONSCRIPTED INTO THE HOLY GAIAN ARMY AT THE AGE OF 18, BY WHICH TIME SHE HAD ALREADY MASTERED HER UNIQUE ABILITY TO COAT HERSELF IN FIRE, STONE AND ICE. NOW A 35-YEAR-OLD WAR VETERAN, AVERNA HAS SEEN MORE THAN ENOUGH DEATH AND DESTRUCTION (MOST OF WHICH WAS CAUSED BY HERSELF) TO LAST A LIFETIME.

THE ONLY CHILD OF TWO RESPECTED ARKKNIGHT'S FROM BRAKKEN-CRUZ, AVERNA IS AN ELITE TACTICIAN AND FIGHTER WHO SCALED THE RANKS OF THE ARMY TO BECOME THE LEADER OF THE TEMPEST DEATH SQUAD. THE TEAM SERVED TOGETHER INTERMITTENTLY FOR 10 YEARS, BECOMING A LEGENDARY SQUAD KNOWN WORLDWIDE. IT WAS DURING THIS TIME THAT THE SERIOUS AND STERN AVERNA'S HEART WAS MELTED BY HER CHARMING LIEUTENANT, EFRIR, WHOM SHE LATER MARRIED. AVERNA'S FIERCE LOYALTY TO THE ARMY BEGAN TO WANE AFTER HER SQUAD WAS OBLITERATED BY AN AYEN ARKKNIGHT WHO WAS PROTECTING AN ORPHANAGE THE SQUAD HAD UNKNOWINGLY BEEN ORDERED TO DESTROY.



SIX MONTHS AGO.

I STAND BEFORE YOU  
A GRATEFUL MAN. AYE AND  
EARTH HAVE INTENSIFIED THEIR  
ATTACKS IN RECENT MONTHS AND  
WE CANNOT STAND ON OUR  
VOLUNTEERS AND NEW  
RECRUITS ALONE.

YOU VETERANS  
WHO FOUGHT IN YEARS PAST,  
AND WHO HAVE BEEN CALLED BACK  
TO OUR AID. WE THE MILITARY,  
AND WE THE PEOPLE,  
THANK YOU.



AND A SPECIAL  
THANKS GOES TO  
YOU ARKKNIGHTS WHO  
LEAD THE CHARGE IN  
OUR RIGHTEOUS  
WAR.



USE YOUR  
GIFTS IN HONOUR  
OF THE ONE AND YOUR  
REWARD FROM HIM  
SHALL BE GREAT.







FOR THE  
GLORY OF  
GAIA!



FOR THE  
GLORY OF  
GAIA!



HMPH...



FOR THE  
GLORY OF  
GAIA.

# EFRIR

A HIGHLY RESPECTED ASSASSIN, KNOWN FOR HIS SHARP TONGUE AND QUICK WIT, HIS FEATS OVER THE PAST 16 YEARS HAVE PROVEN THAT THIS 36-YEAR-OLD VETERAN IS NOT TO BE TAKEN LIGHTLY. HAILING FROM THE RURAL AREAS OF EAST OORUNELL, EFRIR WAS IMMEDIATELY SPOTTED AS AN INCREDIBLY SKILLED SOLDIER, DESPITE NOT HAVING A POWERFUL ARKKNIGHT ABILITY.

EVEN THOUGH HE WAS GOOD AT HIS JOB, EFRIR BEGAN TO GROW SICK OF IT IN HIS MID 20'S. HE WAS DISHONOURABLY DISCHARGED AT THE AGE OF 26 BUT WAS REDRAFTED SIX MONTHS LATER TO TEMPEST SQUAD. EFRIR WAS PLACED INTO TEMPEST SQUAD NOT ONLY DUE TO HIS ABILITY TO COAT METAL IN FIRE AND ELECTRICITY, BUT ALSO WITH THE HOPE THAT UNDER AVERNA'S STRONG LEADERSHIP, HE WOULD BECOME LESS UNPREDICTABLE AND MORE RESPECTFUL OF THE CHAIN OF COMMAND.

AFTER THE ORPHANAGE INCIDENT, A TROUBLED EFRIR AND AVERNA RETIRED FROM THE ARMY TO LIVE A QUIET LIFE ON THE COAST. BUT IT PROVED TO BE SHORT-LIVED.





ARE THESE OKAY?

YEAH, THEY'RE PERFECT.



LET ME GET MY FLINT.

HOLD ON, LITTLE LADY. NO NEED TO GO OLD SCHOOL ANYMORE.

HUH?



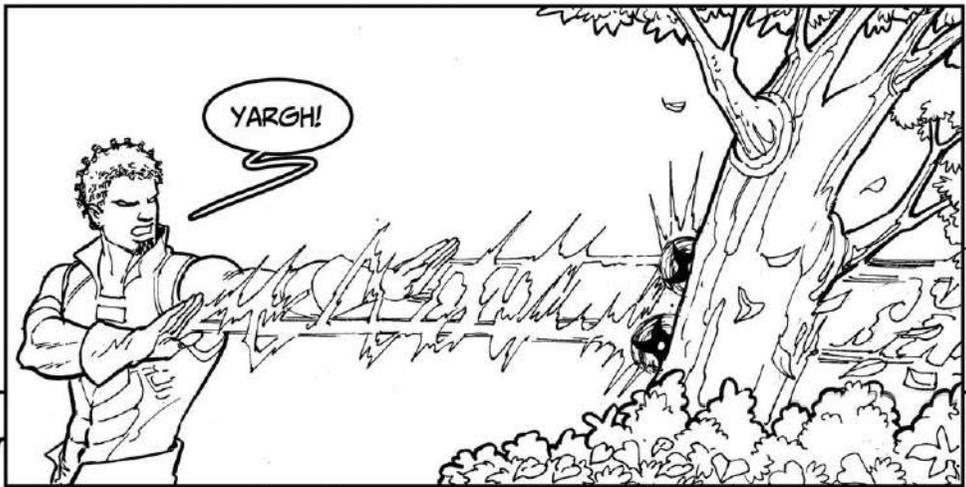
NEVER FORGET, ASTER...

WHEN WE ARE BORN, OUR POWERS ARE GIFTS TO THE WORLD.



WHETHER THEY CONTINUE TO BE SO, DEPENDS ON HOW WE USE THEM.

SO TAKE A SEAT AND LET US-





HEY!  
YOU ALMOST  
HIT ME!



EHP?

ASTER!  
ARE YOU  
OKAY?

YES, TEGO.  
NOW LET GO  
OF ME.



THAT WAS THE  
INTENTION.

WHO  
ARE YOU?



UM, YEAH,  
SORRY, IT'S JUST  
THAT I THOUGHT I LOST  
YOU FOR GOOD BACK  
AT THE SWAMPS  
FIVE DAYS AGO.

I WASN'T  
SURE HOW  
LONG YOU'D MAKE IT  
IN THE CAPTIVITY OF  
BARBARIC GAIAN  
SOLDIERS.

IS THAT  
SO?

NOT THAT  
I DON'T THINK  
YOU CAN LOOK  
AFTER YOURSELF...  
I MEAN-

THEN  
HOW COMES  
YOU'VE ASSUMED  
I'M A CAPTIVE?



AHEM!  
ASTER WHO  
IS THIS?

TEGO,  
A FRIEND FROM  
MY VILLAGE. HE MUST  
HAVE FOLLOWED  
ME.



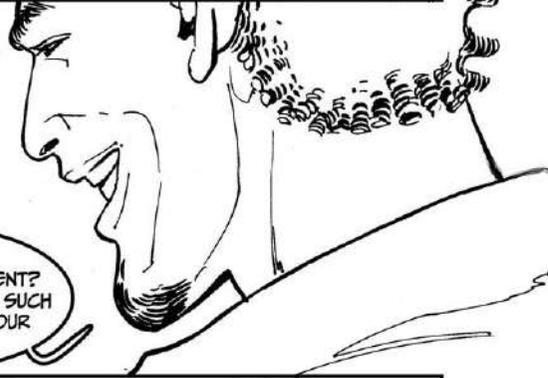
WELL ANY FRIEND  
OF ASTER'S, IS A  
FRIEND OF MINE!

WE'LL TRUST  
HIM IF YOU DO,  
ASTER!



EFRIR, YOU  
LITERALLY JOINED  
US THREE DAYS AGO.  
I DON'T EVEN  
TRUST YOU.

YOU THINK  
I'M A DOUBLE AGENT?  
HOW CAN YOU HAVE SUCH  
LITTLE FAITH IN YOUR  
HUSBAND?!



WE'LL  
DISCUSS THAT  
LATER.

EITHER WAY,  
WE'RE DEEP IN OORUN  
TERRITORY, SO WE'LL KEEP  
THE PAIR OF YOU  
AROUND FOR NOW.

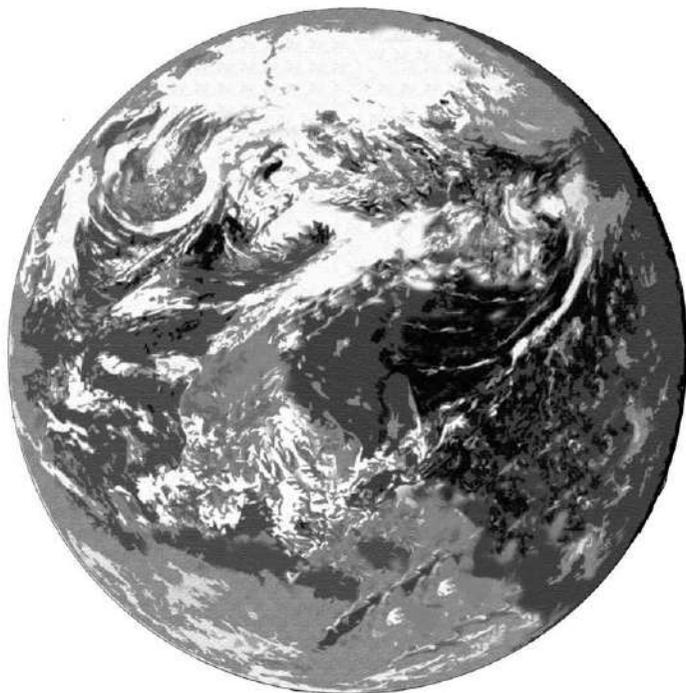
# GAIA

GAIA IS ONE OF THE THREE HUMAN WORLDS IN THE ARKVERSE FILLED WITH A DIVERSE SET OF CULTURES AND ETHNIC GROUPS. ONLY ONE LANGUAGE IS SPOKEN ON THE ENTIRE PLANET OF GAIA; ORTHOR-STONGUE, A LANGUAGE WITH MYSTERIOUS ORIGINS THAT IS UNDERSTOOD BY EVERYONE ON EVERY WORLD NO MATTER THEIR FIRST LANGUAGE.

GAIA IS THE LEAST POPULATED OF THE THREE HUMAN WORLDS BUT HAS THE LARGEST AMOUNT OF ARKNIGHTS. THE GAIAN'S BELIEVE THAT THE HIGH CONCENTRATION OF ARKNIGHT BIRTH'S INDICATES THE APPROVAL OF THE ONE AND JUSTIFIES THEIR ENDLESS WAR WITH THE OTHER TWO WORLDS. LIKE THE OTHER TWO WORLDS, MOST GAIAN MACHINERY AND ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES RELY ON NETHERGY PLANTS, HOWEVER THE LARGE AMOUNT OF ARKNIGHTS HAS CAUSED TECHNOLOGY ON GAIA TO ADVANCE MUCH SLOWER THAN IT HAS ON AYE AND EARTH.

THE CURRENT MAJOR WORLD POWERS ON THE PLANET ARE AS FOLLOWS: THE BRAKKEN-CRUZ EMPIRE, THE UNITED STATES OF OORUNELL, AND THE KINGDOM OF ORMADILLIA. ALL OF THESE NATIONS HAVE WARRED AMONG THEMSELVES IN THE PAST, BUT CURRENTLY WORK TOGETHER IN A MIGHTY ALLIANCE AGAINST EARTH AND AYE.

MOVEMENT TO THE OTHER WORLDS ARE POSSIBLE VIA THE TWO ARKBRIDGES ON THE PLANET. ONE AT THE SOUTH POLE THAT LEADS TO AYE, AND THE SECOND NEAR THE NORTH POLE IN POJEMA THAT LEADS TO EARTH. THE NORTHERN ARKBRIDGE IS THE FIRST ARK-



LATER THAT DAY.

SO I WAKE UP AND MY WIFE IS GONE WITHOUT AS MUCH AS A NOTE!



A FEW WEEKS LATER I HEAR YOU'VE BEEN SPOTTED TRAVELLING NORTH WITH A GIRL FITTING THE DESCRIPTION OF ASTER THE DESTROYER.

SO NATURALLY, I VOLUNTEERED TO BRING YOU IN.



YOU'RE ANNOYED THAT I LEFT YOU?

YEP.

I HEARD ASTER WAS NEARBY AND I WASN'T SURE IF YOU WOULD AGREE TO COME. SO I SPARED YOU THE DECISION.

WHAT?! THAT'S NOT VERY WIFE-LIKE.



I LEFT YOU BEHIND TO KEEP YOU SAFE, AND THAT'S YOUR RESPONSE?

OW! SEE! THERE'S THE REASON I WAS LOOKING FOR!





BUT IT WAS STILL UNWISE NOT TO BRING ME ALONG WITH YOU, AVERNA - ASTER IS A WANTED FUGITIVE IN EVERY WORLD. AND YES I KNOW THE GIRL IS IMPRESSIVE; I'VE HEARD ABOUT HOW SHE CAN SHUT DOWN A CITY'S POWER GRID, OR LEVEL A BATTALION OF ARKKNIGHTS BY TEMPORARILY DEPOWERING THEM. BUT SHE'S STILL JUST ONE PERSON, AND IN MY EXPERIENCE - IN OUR EXPERIENCE - IT TAKES MORE THAN ONE PERSON TO CHANGE THE WORLD. ISN'T THAT PART OF THE REASON WHY YOU WERE ASKED TO MAKE THE TEMPEST SQUAD?

AND EVEN IGNORING THOSE FACTS, YOU'RE STILL MY WIFE - I WOULD HAVE FOLLOWED YOU ANYWAY.



THEY'RE NOT AS BARBARIC AS THE STORIES BACK HOME SAY GAIA'S ARE.

WHY ARE YOU FOLLOWING ME, TEGO?

YOU SHOULD BE BACK ON AYE.



FOR WHAT? THERE IS NO VILLAGE TO GO BACK TO. THERE IS NO TEMPLE TO GUARD. EVERYONE'S DEAD - OUR FAMILIES, THE PRIESTS, THE ACADEMY. ALL GONE.

THE PRIESTS SENT ME AFTER YOU BECAUSE THEY KNEW THAT, THOUGH YOU REJECT IT, YOU DO NEED HELP.



GAIA IS LITERALLY A WORLD AWAY FROM HOME. TO MAKE IT ACROSS OUR WORLD AND THEN TO THE TOP OF GAIA IS TOO MUCH FOR YOU TO DO ALONE!



IT IS NOT! THIS IS MY DUTY. MY RESPONSIBILITY. NO ONE ELSE NEEDS TO GET DRAGGED INTO IT. I'VE ALREADY BEEN ENOUGH OF A BURDEN TO EVERYONE.

WHAT? YOU WERE NEVER A BURDEN TO US. YOU WERE ALWAYS A GIFT!



# TEGO

TEGO IS A 17 YEAR OLD TRAINEE TEMPLE GUARD FROM ORIUS. KNOWN FOR HIS LOUD MOUTH AND IMPULSIVE BEHAVIOUR, HE WAS A STAR STUDENT AT THE ACADEMY AND, DESPITE NOT HAVING THE PHYSICAL ADVANTAGES OF AN ARKKNIGHT, SOON BECAME ASTER'S MAIN RIVAL AND FRIEND.

HAVING GROWN UP ON STORIES OF THE BARBARIC GAIANS AND EARTHLINGS, TEGO IS WARY OF NON-AYEN'S AND HAS MANAGED TO AVOID UNNECESSARY CONTACT WITH THEM IN HIS TRAVELS ACROSS AYE AND INTO GAIA. SEVERAL TIMES ON HIS JOURNEY TEGO HAS SAVED ASTER'S LIFE OR COVERED HER TRACKS WITHOUT HER REALISING, BUT HE CARES NOT FOR THE PRAISE AND SO WILL NEVER LET HER KNOW.









...YOU ARE SURROUNDED BY TRAITORS!

THERE'S A PRETTY PRICE ON YOUR HEAD, GIRL.

SOLDIERS?



WAIT? SOLDIERS CAN GET BOUNTY REWARDS NOW?!

I KNEW IT! TOO BAD I'VE ALREADY SWITCHED SIDES.

WATCH AND LEARN, KIDS!



KEEP UP IF YOU CAN, OLD MAN!

WE TEMPLE GUARDS ARE SOME OF THE FINEST FIGHTERS AROUND.





ARE YOU OKAY, ASTER?

DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME. WATCH OUT FOR YOURSELF!



LET'S GO FOR ONE MORE ROUND!

SO I SEE YOU TOOK DOWN THE UNGIFTED.

NO GREAT FEAT FOR ACCOMPLISHED ARKKNIGHTS SUCH AS YOURSELVES, EFRIR AND AVERNA.



KALIYA, MY GOOD MAN! IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU AGAIN.

I WOULD SAY THE SAME TO YOU...



BUT YOU WENT BACK ON YOUR VOWS TO PROTECT THE PEOPLE OF GAIA.

WHO WOULD HAVE THOUGHT THE FAMOUS TEMPEST DUO WOULD SIDE WITH THE ENEMY?

AND AN AYEN AT THAT!

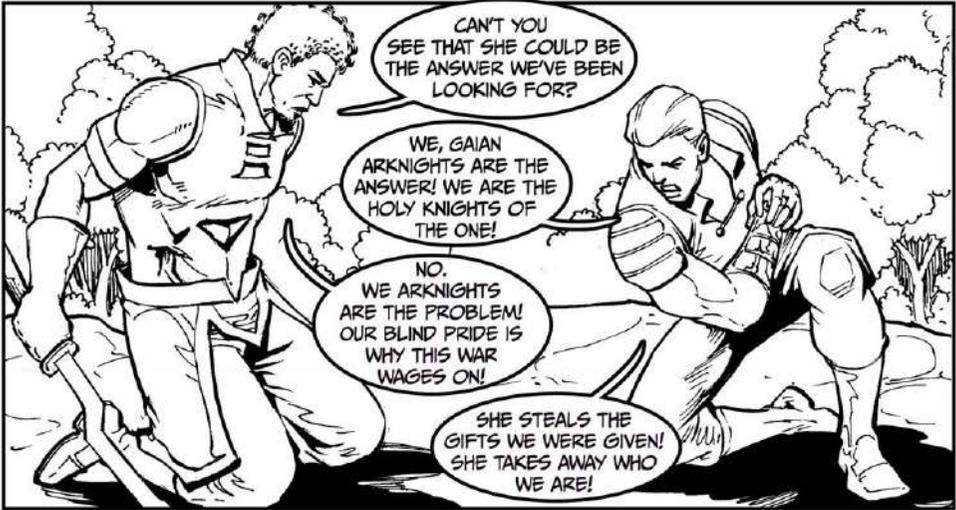








I TOOK AWAY YOUR ACCURSED POWERS.





# THE HOLY GAIAN ARMY

THE HOLY GAIAN ARMY IS THE RELIGIOUS MILITARY FORCE CREATED FROM THE COMBINED ARMIES OF ALL GAIAN NATIONS INCLUDING OORUNELL, BRAKKEN-CRUZ, POJEMA, AND ORMADILLIA. RECOGNISABLE BY THEIR BLACK AND WHITE ARMOUR, THEIR MILLIONS OF SOLDIERS ARE TASKED WITH PROTECTING THE WORLD FROM INVADING FORCES AS WELL AS INVADING OTHER PLANETS IN TURN.

SINCE GAIA IS THE HUMAN WORLD WITH THE MOST ARKNIGHTS, THEIR ARMY IS VIEWED AS THE MOST UNPREDICTABLE, CAUSING THE OTHER TWO WORLDS TO APPROACH BATTLES WITH EXTREME CAUTION.

THE MAJORITY OF THE HOLY GAIAN ARMY ARE CONSCRIPTS, BUT ONLY ARKNIGHTS WILL BE CONSCRIPTED MORE THAN ONCE. GAIAN SOLDIERS ARE TRAINED IN MARKSMANSHIP AND MACHINE USAGE, BUT GUNS ARE BANNED FROM BEING USED ON GAIAN SOIL (WITH THE EXCEPTION BEING IN THE CASE OF AN ENEMY INVASION). THIS MEANS THAT IN COMPARISON TO EARTHLINGS AND AYENS, EVEN AN AVERAGE GAIAN SOLDIER IS A MASTER SWORDSMAN OR WOMAN.



LATER THAT DAY.



WHAT'S WRONG, ASTIE? YOU DON'T LOOK SO GOOD.

YOU'RE ONE TO TALK...

IT DRAINS HER WHEN SHE USES HER POWERS.

TEGO!

WHAT? HE SHOULD KNOW.



REALLY? IT DRAINS YOU THAT MUCH TO DEPOWER ONE ARKKNIGHT?

YOU SHOULD HAVE LEFT THE FIGHTING TO US.

YOU GOT HURT PROTECTING ME, IT WAS ONLY RIGHT THAT I HELP.



HOW LOVING! YOU DIDN'T WANT TO SEE UNCLE EFRIR GET HURT!

EH?



I'M SO TOUCHED. I COULD CRY RIGHT NOW!

IF YOU DON'T SHUT UP, "UNCLE", I'LL NULLIFY YOUR HEALING ABILITIES.



I THINK I'VE FIGURED OUT YOUR PLAN. YOU'RE GOING TO NULLIFY THE WHOLE WORLD, RIGHT?

NO, THE WHOLE ARKVERSE.



PERMANENTLY.

HUH?



BUT IT DRAINS YOU SO MUCH JUST TO DEPOWER ONE PERSON FOR A FEW MINUTES, HOW CAN YOU DO THREE WORLDS?



THE ARKBRIDGE IN POJEMA WILL AMPLIFY MY POWERS.

BUT EVEN SO IT WILL TAKE A LOT OF ENERGY TO DO IT. THAT'S WHY I'VE BEEN CONSERVING MY STRENGTH.



AND THAT'S EXACTLY WHY YOU NEED THE HELP OF YOUR FRIENDS.

NO.



IF YOU WOULD LET ME, I WOULD LEAVE YOU ALL HERE.

ALL I DO IS GET PEOPLE HURT.



THEY LOOK LIKE YOU.

YOUR SIBLINGS?

YES.



WHEN THE AYEN IMMORTAL COUNCIL FOUND OUT THAT SOMEONE WITH MY POWERS EXISTED, THEY WANTED TO USE ME AS A WEAPON.

MY VILLAGE REFUSED TO GIVE ME UP, CONSIDERING ME TO BE THE KEY TO BRINGING PEACE, NOT MORE DEATH.

THE COUNCIL WOULDN'T HAVE IT.

THEY SENT A SQUADRON OF ARKNIGHTS AND EVEN AN IMMORTAL TO SLAUGHTER A DEFENSELESS VILLAGE.



SO MANY DIED  
SAVING ME. ALL SO  
THAT I COULD SAVE  
EVERYONE.

NO ONE ELSE  
NEEDS TO DIE FOR ME, OR DIE  
FOR ANYONE ELSE FOR THAT MATTER.  
I WILL BRING AN END TO THE AGE OF  
ARKKNIGHTS, AND EVERYONE WILL SEE  
THEM FOR WHAT THEY ARE.

THEY - WE - ARE NOT  
SOLDIERS OF THE ONE. WE ARE  
NOT A GIFT TO MANKIND. WE  
ARE MANKIND'S BURDEN.

WELL. WHAT  
CAN I SAY...  
I AGREE WITH  
YOU.

HUH?

THIS WAR WOULD  
HAVE ENDED A LONG TIME  
AGO IF NOT FOR  
ARKKNIGHTS.

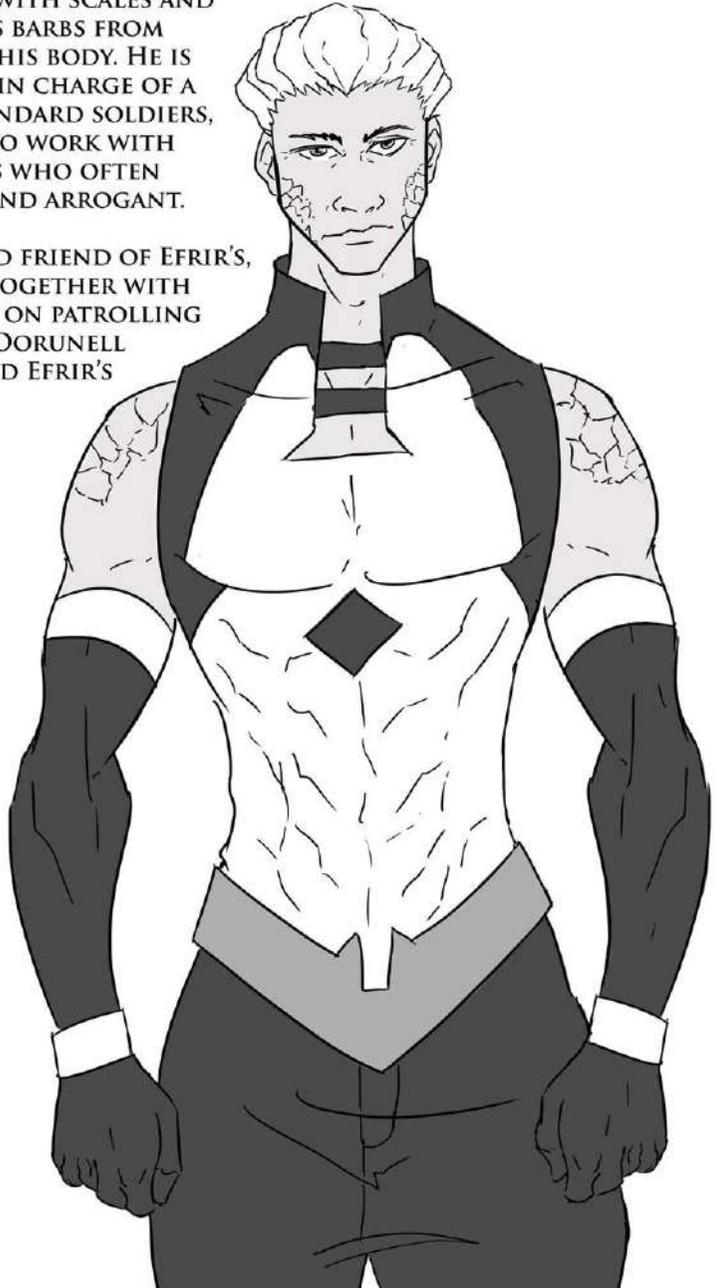
AND THAT'S WHY  
I FIGHT BY YOUR SIDE.  
I FIGHT FOR AVERNA, FOR TEGO,  
FOR EVERYONE - AND THAT INCLUDES  
YOU. SO LET US HELP  
YOU, OKAY?

# KALIYA

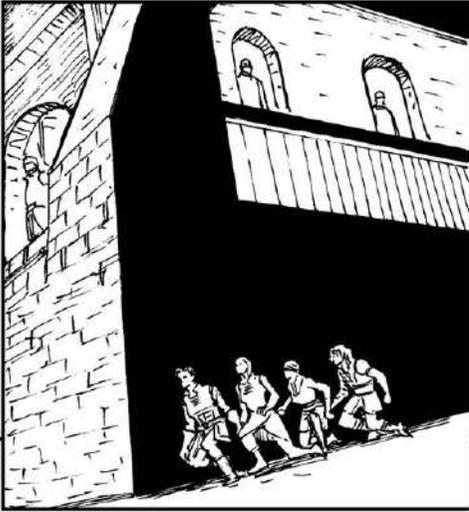
KALIYA IS A 40-YEAR-OLD WAR VETERAN FROM ORMADILIA WHO HAS SERVED SIX TOURS IN THE ARMY. KALIYA WILLINGLY VOLUNTEERED FOR THE ARMY WHEN HE WAS 18 AND HAS FOUGHT ON BOTH EARTH AND AYE SEVERAL TIMES DURING HIS DEPLOYMENTS. HE IS HIGHLY RELIGIOUS AND BELIEVES IN THE DIVINITY OF ARKNIGHTS, OFTEN VISITING TEMPLES ON HIS TRAVELS.

A SKILLED BUT LOW POWERED ARKNIGHT, KALIYA HAS THE ABILITY TO HARDEN HIS SKIN WITH SCALES AND SHOOT POISONOUS BARBS FROM VARIOUS PARTS OF HIS BODY. HE IS TYPICALLY PLACED IN CHARGE OF A SQUADRON OF STANDARD SOLDIERS, PREFERRING NOT TO WORK WITH OTHER ARKNIGHTS WHO OFTEN ARE EGOTISTICAL AND ARROGANT.

KALIYA WAS A GOOD FRIEND OF EFRIR'S, HAVING WORKED TOGETHER WITH THE TEMPEST DUO ON PATROLLING MISSIONS ACROSS OORUNELL BEFORE AVERNA AND EFRIR'S DESERTION.



THE ARKBRIDGE, ONE WEEK LATER.



WE'RE ALMOST THERE. HOW YOU HOLDING UP, EFFY?

I'LL BE FINE. THE POISON IS ALMOST GONE - I THINK.



ARE YOU OKAY, ASTER?

YES...UM...

YES.







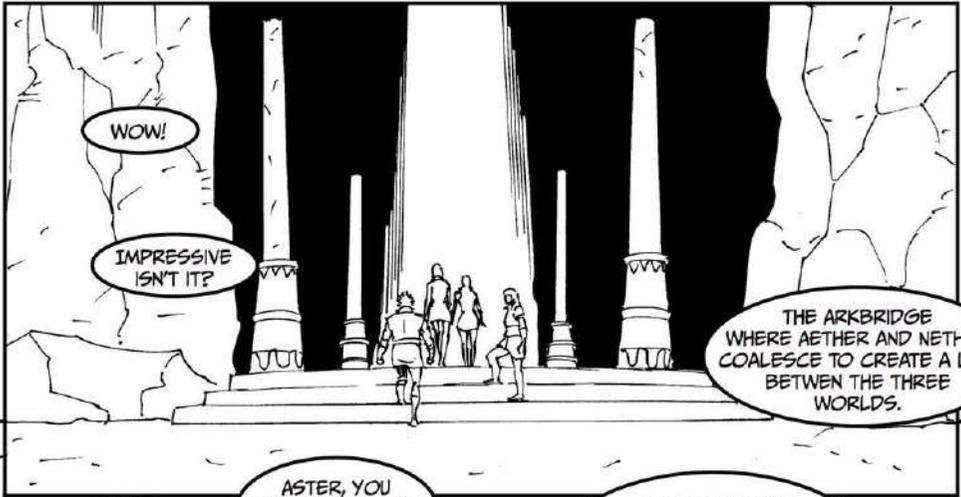


AVERNA  
AND I WERE  
STATIONED HERE  
A FEW YEARS AGO  
SO WE KNOW ALL  
THE NOOKS AND  
CRANNIES.

LOOKS  
LIKE THEY NEVER  
TOOK OUR ADVICE  
TO SECURE THE  
WATERWAYS.

THANK  
THE ONE FOR  
STUBBORN  
BOSSSES.

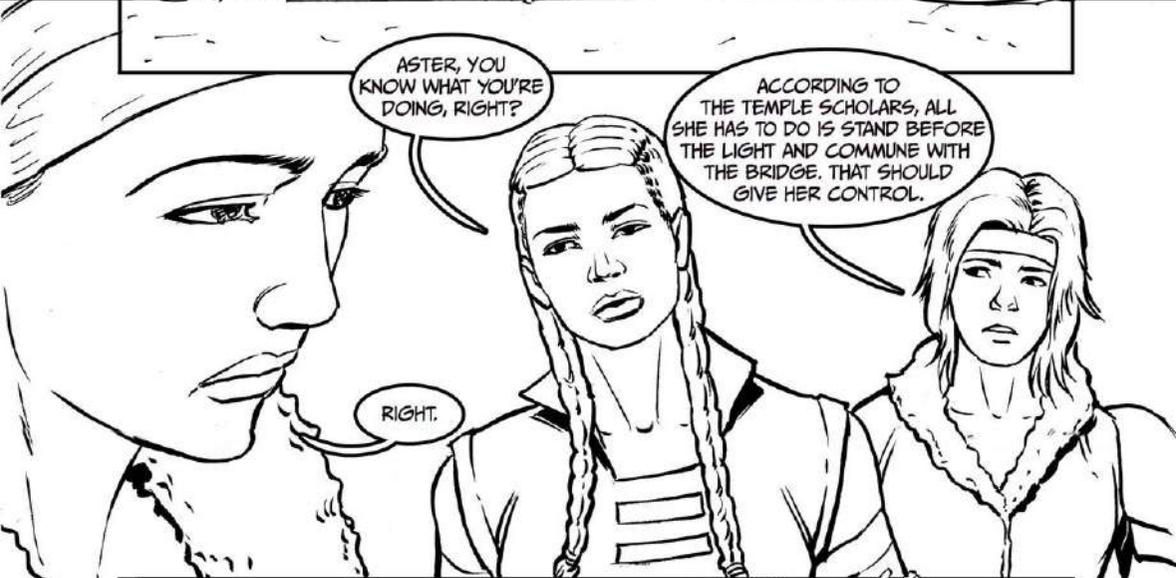




WOW!

IMPRESSIVE  
ISN'T IT?

THE ARKBRIDGE  
WHERE AETHER AND NETHER  
COALESCE TO CREATE A LINK  
BETWEEN THE THREE  
WORLDS.



ASTER, YOU  
KNOW WHAT YOU'RE  
DOING, RIGHT?

ACCORDING TO  
THE TEMPLE SCHOLARS, ALL  
SHE HAS TO DO IS STAND BEFORE  
THE LIGHT AND COMMUNE WITH  
THE BRIDGE. THAT SHOULD  
GIVE HER CONTROL.

RIGHT.



HOPEFULLY,  
IT'S AS EASY AS  
IT SOUNDS.

DON'T WORRY,  
WE'RE HERE WITH  
YOU.

AS ARE WE!



BACK FOR MORE, EHP?

THIS IS NO JOKING MATTER EFRIR. I CANNOT LET YOU DO THIS!



THEN YOU ARE FREE TO STOP HER.

YOU JUST HAVE TO GET THROUGH US FIRST!



PLEASE HOLD THEM! I NEED MORE TIME!

WE'VE GOT YOU COVERED!

WE WON'T LET YOU DOWN!

YOU CAN COUNT ON US!

IT'S JUST AS WE THOUGHT, TEGO.

THERE ARE SO MANY.

SO MANY...

YOU'RE STRONG, ASTER! YOU CAN DO THIS!

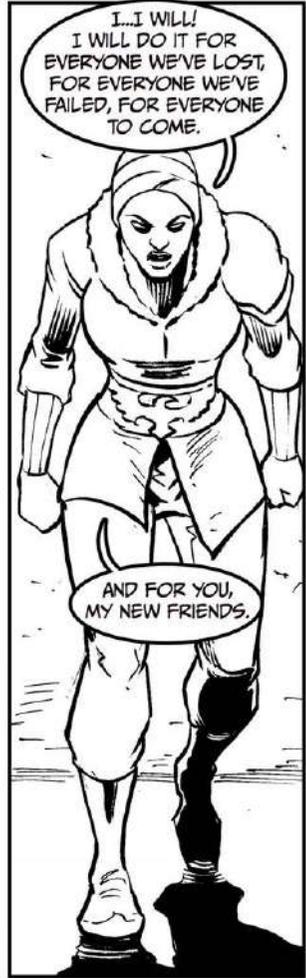
I... CAN'T.

THERE'S SO MUCH POWER FLOWING THROUGH ALL THE ARKKNIGHTS ACROSS THE THREE WORLDS.

IT WILL TAKE ALL I HAVE.

ASTER! NO!









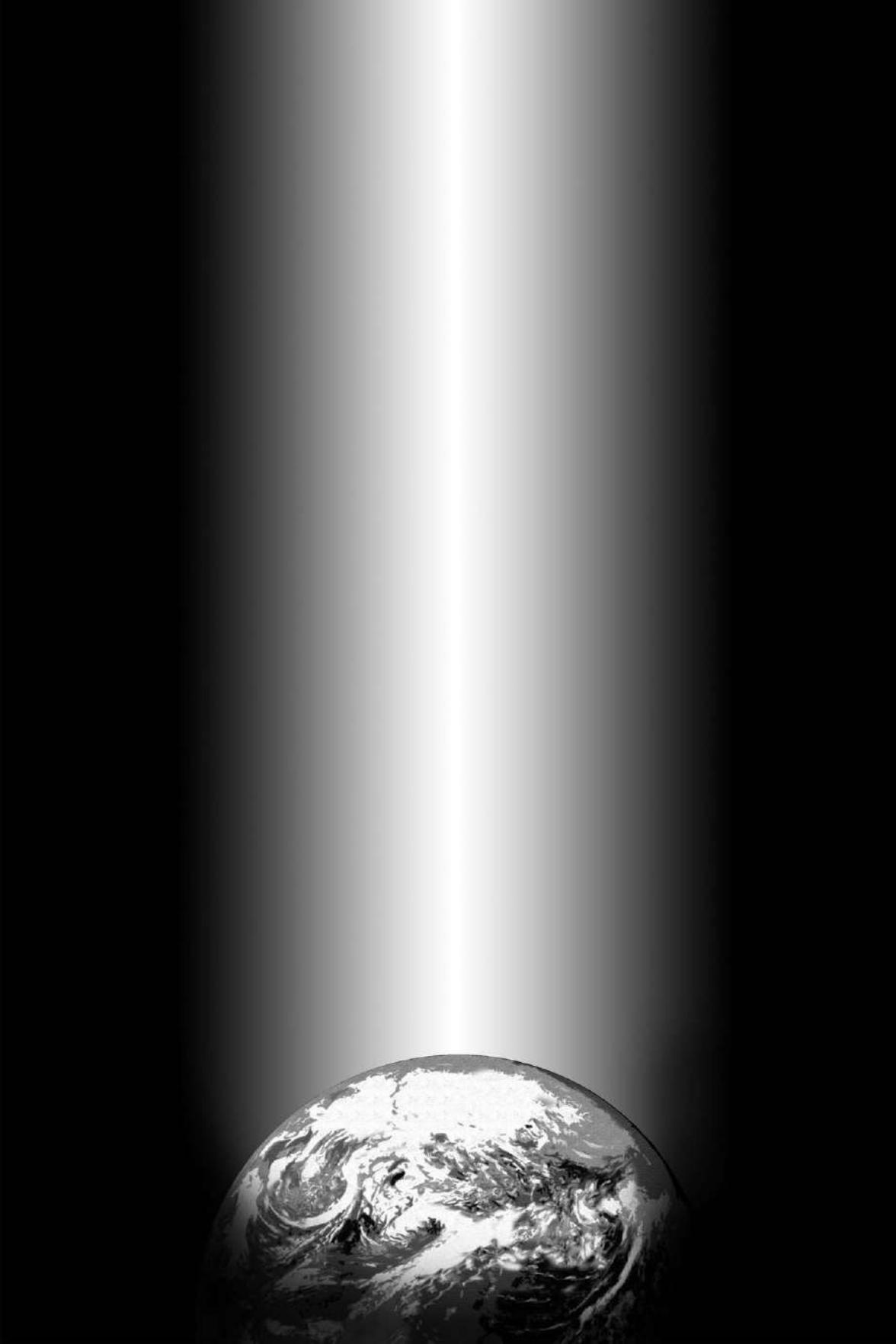
MAY THE LIGHT  
OF THE ONE GRACE THE  
SHORES OF OUR ARKVERSE  
ONCE MORE. AND MAY OUR  
WORLDS GLISTEN ON  
FOREVER.

PLEASE ACCEPT  
MY GIFT, CHILDREN OF  
THE ONE.



PLEASE, ACCEPT  
MY PEACE.









AND WITH THAT THE THREE HUMAN WORLDS WERE CHANGED FOREVER. MILLIONS OF ARKKNIGHTS SCATTERED ACROSS AYE, GAIA, AND EARTH WERE STRIPPED OF THEIR ABILITIES. THE WORLDS, BEREFT OF THE PILLARS OF THEIR MILITARY, ECONOMIC, AND SOCIAL MIGHT WERE FORCED TO SWIFTLY SIGN PEACE TREATIES. THE WAR THAT HAD RAGED ON FOR CENTURIES WAS FINALLY OVER. A ONE ARMED SOLDIER MANAGED TO SURVIVE THE EXPLOSION AT THE THE ARKBRIDGE, AND LIVED TO TELL THE TALE OF THE FOUR THAT GAVE EVERYTHING TO BRING PEACE TO THE WORLD. THE TALE TRAVELLED TO THE FARTHEST REACHES OF EACH WORLD UNTIL THERE WAS NOT A SOUL WHO HAD NOT HEARD OF THE HERO - OR THE VILLAIN - THAT HAD TAKEN THE POWER OF THE BLESSED ARKKNIGHTS. HER STORY WAS TOLD TO CHILDREN, IT WAS RECITED IN TEMPLES, IT WAS RECANTED AT THE SIGNING OF FUTURE PEACE TREATIES. AND IT WAS A TALE KNOWN TO ALL AS

ASTER'S PEACE.

OTHER STORIES  
IN THE ARK REGENESIS SAGA

# ARK SONG

THE CHRONICLES OF THE  
NOVUS AEVUM

# DUSK 22

"THEY ARE NOT A GIFT.  
THEY ARE MANKIND'S BURDEN."

Aye, Earth, and Gaia. War has waged on for centuries across these three human worlds without any sign of victory for any side. Among the warriors fighting in this war are special individuals with unusual abilities called Arknights, believed to be Holy knights chosen by The One. As the war wages on, somewhere on the Gaian continent of Oorunell, a young Arknight makes her way through enemy territory hoping to end the war that plagues mankind for good. However with the hopes of billions resting on her shoulders, will she be able to carry such a heavy burden alone?



HAWTHORNEARTS

[www.hawthornearts.com](http://www.hawthornearts.com)

ISBN 978-1-9161013-1-9



9 781234 567897

Digital Edition